

REMARKS

Claims 17-19, 30-47, 50-66, 69 and 72-73 are cancelled above without disclaimer or prejudice. Claims 20, 48, 67 and 70 are amended above. No new matter is entered, and such amendments are fully supported by the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed. Claims 20-21, 48-49, 67-68, and 70-71 remain pending in the present application.

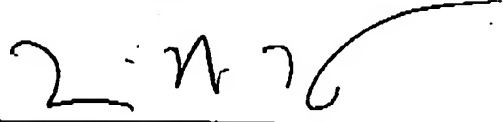
The final Office Action of September 12, 2006 rejects claims 17-19, 30-44, 47, 50-66, 69 and 72-72 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable given US 6,607,620 in view of US 5,130,067 and, with respect to claims 45-46, further in view of US 6,488,795. Applicants traverse the rejections to the extent that they can be maintained. However, to expedite prosecution and allowance of claims, the rejected claims are cancelled above. Applicants do not otherwise acquiesce to the Examiner's rejections and reserve the right to raise additional arguments and/or file continuing applications to further prosecute the rejected claims. At this time, however, due to the current cancellation of the claims, such rejections are rendered moot. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections.

The final Office Action objects to claims 20-21, 48-49, 67-68 and 70-71 and deems the objected claims allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. As noted above, these claims have now been amended to place them into condition for allowance. Since this Office Action places the claims into condition for allowance, and raises no new issues, consideration and entry of this Amendment After Final is appropriate.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

12 December 2006
Date


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